UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/24446
14 August 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

# LETTER DATED 14 AUGUST 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to yesterday's formal meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in which resolutions 770 (1992) and 771 (1992) were adopted. In this meeting those delegations not members of the Security Council were not given the opportunity to take the floor and place their views on record.

I have the honour to enclose annexed to this letter the text of the statement that would have been delivered by my delegation at this meeting had the debate been open to all members of the United Nations.

I would be grateful if this letter and its annex are circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mustafa AKŞIN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

92-38209 3431j (E) 140892 160892

/...

Annex

Statement by the Turkish Delegation on agenda item "The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina"

Mr President,

My delegation has asked for the floor to voice the deep concern of the Government of Turkey over the tragic events that have been taking place in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and over the inability of the international community to bring them to an end.

What we are witnessing is the brazen violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of a Member State of the United Nations by its neighbour. The land grab that is in progress in Bosnia has been pursued with total disregard to the lives and property of the Bosnian population. In fact, driven by the monstrous policy of ethnic cleansing, the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina has resulted in the displacement of vast masses of people. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries. Those who remain are subjected to the ruthless Serbian attacks in the towns and cities of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Disease and starvation are taking their toll. Information is being received of massive human rights violations committed in Serbian detention camps bringing back terrible memories of a period we all thought was buried in history. Those responsible for this massive suffering are committing crimes against humanity. The international community has welcomed with renewed hope the numerous cease-fires that have been arranged. New hopes were raised each time a further round of peace talks began. And yet, nothing seems to change and the devastation of Bosnia-Herzegovina continues without let up.

Security Council resolutions demanding an end to hostilities have been ignored, the imposition of sanctions have had no effect, and the provision of humanitarian assistance has been blocked. The Serbs have defied all Security Council resolutions and they have sorely tried the patience of the international community.

Mr. President,

The situation created by Serbian aggression not only flouts all moral principles, but also constitutes a most serious threat to peace and security in the Balkans and beyond. The danger of the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina spreading to other parts of the former Yugoslavia is very real and every effort must be made in the United Nations to stop the carnage in Bosnia-Herzegovina so that it does not spill over into such areas like the Sandjak and Kosova.

Mr. President,

Turkey's interest in the fate of Bosnia-Herzegovina derives from its being a Balkan country. But it is not just geographic proximity that motivates Turkey to take a close interest in Bosnia-Herzegovina. For half a millennium we shared a common history and culture with the Bosnian people. During this period Moslem, Serb and Croat coexisted peacefully and each group respected the other. This exemplary state of affairs is well reflected in Ivo Andric's book The Bridge on the Drina. This good tradition of tolerance survived until our times. It is very sad that this beautiful edifice has been so brutally destroyed by rampant Serbian nationalism.

Turkey was among the very first countries to recognize the independence of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have been active in all international forums trying to bring peace and reconciliation to this tortured country. We have made a major effort to provide humanitarian relief and have received over 15,000 Bosnian refugees in our country. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Mr. Hikmet Çetin, has recented visited Sarajevo to bring comfort to its suffering inhabitants. Turkey has sponsored a resolution back in May in UNESCO calling for the sparing of the historic monuments of Bosnia from wanton destruction.

The Government of Turkey continues to support strongly all Security Council resolutions dealing with this question. We feel that the deteriorating situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina requires decisive action on the part of the international community to bring to an end the suffering of the Bosnians. My Government has, to this end, proposed a plan of action which basically consists of the following measures:

- The murders committed by Serbian irregulars in Bosnia-Herzegovina should be declared to be crimes against humanity and those responsible should be accountable for their acts under international humanitarian law.

- Unimpeded and continued access to all camps, prisons and detention centres should be granted also to United Nations personnel; these locations should be supervised by the United Nations.

- All outside assistance to the Serbian irregulars in Bosnia-Herzegovina should cease immediately. All heavy arms in the possession of Serbian irregulars should be surrendered to UNPROFOR according to relevant Security Council resolutions. Subsequently, all heavy arms belonging to other forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina should also be surrendered to UNPROFOR.

- If these measures are ignored, then the means should be sought for their enforcement through collective military action. In this context, the arms embargo which also applies to Bosnia-Herzegovina should be lifted and the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina should be allowed to procure weapons and military equipment for its self-defence.

Mr. President,

The draft resolution contained in document S/24421 now before the Council envisages measures to alleviate the humanitarian disaster facing Bosnia-Herzegovina. It calls for all necessary measures to be taken to facilitate the resumption of the flow of humanitarian assistance to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The continuation of humanitarian assistance is of vital importance and we welcome and support all measures that will make this possible. However, we feel very strongly that what should be urgently addressed is bringing to an end the events that necessitated humanitarian assistance in the first place. If this can only be done through collective action under Article 42 of the United Nations Charter, then we should not hesitate to do whatever is necessary. The tragedy of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the suffering of its people demand urgent forceful action. The credibility of the Security Council is in the balance. If we fail this test, we shall have betrayed Bosnia and its suffering people. We shall also have betrayed the United Nations at the dawn of the New World Order.

---